

DDS Briefing - October 1971

Objectives for FY 1971

1. Implement pre-exit interviews.
2. Reduce in-process to EOD ratio.
3. Increase placement officer contact with components and employees.
4. Improve clerical quality and reduce TAS costs.

Highlights of the Year

1. Internal SPD actions.
2. Pre-exit and follow-up interviews.
3. In-process to EOD ratios.
4. Reassignment activity.
5. CSB activity.
6. CSGA and Agency mix monitoring.
7. Concentration on ceiling strength control.

I. Internal SPD Actions

25X9 We entered the year with positions and ended the year with Two 25X9

positions were deleted at the beginning of the year and three have been identified as our contribution to the 5%. During the year, 50% of our people were transferred to other jobs and replaced. Seven out of our 14 professionals were transferred and 13 of the personnel assistants and clerical employees were transferred. During the same time, 21 of our employees attended 26 training courses ranging from typing refresher to Support Trends and Highlights to

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II. Pre-Exit and Follow-up Interviews

On 2 November 1970, we implemented our pre-exit interview program and talked with all voluntary resignees. We did not talk with retirees or employees who were disqualified by the Medical Staff or Security or employees terminated for cause.

When we started pre-exit interviews, it was with the idea that we might be able to salvage good employees and forestall their resignations. I now believe that this is an unrealistic goal. We never salvaged one. By the time an employee reaches the exit interview process, he is so committed to resigning and in many cases is committed to another job on the outside that it is impractical for him to change direction. However, the value of the interview to management is such that I believe the potential for managerial improvement justifies continuation of the program.

During the year, we talked with 333 employees, 212 of which were interviewed in Rosslyn by the Clerical Staffing Branch. The tone and content of these interview reports reflect a continued need for management sensitivity

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to employee concerns. A large majority of the clerical employees indicate that their stenographic and typing skills were not used or only used to a small degree. They indicate that they are not busy. Professional employees to a considerable extent comment on the lack of challenge in their positions, the lack of management awareness or willingness to listen. What we have done in order to get this word back to the components is to assemble pre-exit interview reports by directorate at the end of each quarter and send these to the directorate support officer. We have encouraged the redistribution of these exit interview reports to the component level. Unless or until we can get the information contained in these reports back to the components, we will not be able to achieve any improvement in those areas where it is obviously needed.

We recently had an example of the kind of thing that I would like to see much more of. An employee from a DDI component came through the Division for an exit interview. The employee described a situation in the Branch in which a junior supervisor was inept and so abrasive in her relationships with subordinates that a minor mutiny was in the making. We relayed this information immediately to the component concerned. Within the following week, the Office Head and Deputy Director had been briefed on the problem. The Division Chief had interviewed nine employees in the Branch concerned, reminded the Branch and Deputy Branch Chief of the full scope of their responsibilities and relieved the junior supervisor of all supervisory responsibility. The junior supervisor was pleased at being relieved of supervisory responsibility. About two weeks later, another employee came

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through the Division for an exit interview and volunteered that there had been a major morale problem in the Branch until recently when the Division Chief had interviewed nine employees and had made a number of changes in the Branch. Morale changed drastically and the employees concerned feel that great improvements have been made. We fully appreciate the fact that reaction to an individual exit interview has some potential hazards. The resignee may very well say things that are unsubstantiated and unsupportable. We are therefore very careful not to react to an individual exit interview. What we are concerned with, however, is the tone of the interviews and what we hope to do by sending these reports back to the components is to educate the components to the continued existence of this factor.

We are continuing our follow-up interview program and we have initiated the three year follow-up interview program in DDS&T and the DDI and before the year is out will have implemented this facet of follow-up interviews in other directorates. We are also initiating clerical follow-up interviews which have not heretofore been given. The nature of our clerical assignment process is such that assignment decisions are made with limited knowledge of the employee and the job. As a result, I am sure that we place clerical employees in positions not best suited for the employee. If, as a result of a follow-up interview, we can identify mis-matches of this kind and can do something about rectifying them we may very well be able to head off and prevent future problems.

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III. In-Process to EOD Ratio (In-Process/EOD Chart)

The total number of employees placed in process was considerably lower in FY 1971 than in previous years. All components were ceiling conscious and were quality conscious in their selections of applicants.

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medical examinations, processing time and pure paper handling are considerable when considered in light of the 2500 to 3000 dollars spent on processing from initiation to EOD. It is not likely, in my opinion, that our in process to EOD ratio can be reduced much more below what it is now. There is one area for potential improvement and that is in the CT selection area. The ratio is considerably higher than in any other category. (Comments on number of degrees for new professionals.)

We spent \$75,568 less on invitee travel in FY 1971 than we did in FY 1970. While this is primarily a result of the fact that we had fewer employees in process, we believe that it is also a result of a greater concern for quality and for ensuring that the applicant is, in fact, a strong applicant for the position and the component does in fact have a real interest before invitee travel is authorized. Our special invitee travel program under which the employee is brought to Washington for interview with the component rather

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than for pre-employment processing per se is working successfully and is slowly expanding to other components. We started this activity with OSP and during the year OEL, FMSAC, OER and OCS have all used this system.

IV. Reassignment Activity (Volume of Activities Chart)

One of the most challenging elements of the placement function is to successfully identify suitable positions for employees who come to the Division seeking guidance and assistance in obtaining transfers. This reassignment activity is essentially of three types: professional employees who come to us on their own initiative or are referred to us by their components for assistance, secretarial personnel who apply for consideration in response to the Senior Secretarial Roster announcement and clerical personnel who are seeking reassignment. During the year, placement officers talked with approximately 172 employees and succeeded in helping 16 to get new jobs. In response to the Senior Secretarial Roster announcements, 52 employees came to SPD and were interviewed. 17 were added to the Senior Secretarial Roster. The Roster now contains a total of 72 people grades GS-7 through 11. (2 placements were made.)

In FY 1971, we advertised by word of mouth the fact that the Clerical Staffing Branch in Rosslyn is the focal point for clerical reassignments. 85 employees visited Rosslyn and 18 were reassigned. We have had some interesting examples of reassignment activity. For instance, we had tried for weeks to obtain a reassignment for a young male, GS-4 business administration graduate in RI Division without success. Finally, we were able to persuade the Office of Logistics to accept the young man and even then the

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reassignment almost fell through because one element in Logistics wanted to pick him up at GS-6; another element did not want to go to GS-6 and we compromised at GS-5. In another instance, a young man in Security, GS-5, sought reassignment, was accepted by OCS and in the final stages of the agreement OCS announced that they expected Security to carry the man's service designation for six months. Security balked; OCS said that if Security did not retain the service designation they would not pick up the man. We interceded, talked to all parties concerned, and changed the man's service designation to UD which is in effect no service designation, made a written commitment to OCS that if after four months the man is not acceptable we would take him off their hands. In another instance, OCI had been looking for weeks for a secretary to fill a GS-7 position in Pentagon. The usual channels of vacancy notices, contact with friends, discussions with CSB were not successful. The supervisor in the Pentagon located and proposed to employ a GS-6, step 3 secretary currently working for the Air Force. As a result of reviewing the Senior Secretarial Roster candidates against the possibility that there might be a candidate there we did find a GS-7 in Printing Services Division who was highly acceptable to OCI and who was pleased to get the job. In another instance, a CS component had a female black intel assistant who had been granted a year's Agency sponsorship (tuition and salary) to attend American University working toward a Bachelor's Degree in Education. Following her return to CS in June 1971 she subsequently asked for LWOP to complete courses required for her

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degree. She had received a scholarship award of \$600 from American University. She agreed to take annual leave for six weeks of the period. The CS component did not approve the request for LWOP for the remaining eight weeks required for her to complete her degree which could only be obtained during day time classes. We interceded and reassigned the employee to TAS, changed her service designation to UD and downgraded her from GS-7 to GS-5. The employee willingly accepted the downgrading. EEO counseling in the Division has been minimal. We have had five employees during the year to call for a visit with EEO counselors to discuss what they think might be grievances. In every case, we have been able to convince the employee that his grievance is not supportable. We would like to think that the minimum number of cases stems simply from the fact that there are no grievances, but it is also possible that employees do not feel that they will achieve any meaningful results and therefore do not surface their problems.

V. CSB Activity



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was 6 weeks as compared to 9 to 12 weeks in FY 1970. We feel that this saving is the result of the fact that since December 1970 we have not entered on duty any clericals in a provisional clearance status, that we have for the entire year concentrated on convincing clerical recruiters of our interest in

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quality rather than quantity, that both the Medical Staff and the Security Office have been sensitive to red flags in the application and have requested pre-employment examinations whenever possible disqualifying factors exist. During the period October 1970 to June 1971, because of a concern by components for ceiling control, we had on the average 45 employees in TAS fully cleared, ready for work but no assignments were available for them. In spite of the fact that these people had to wait for permanent assignments and were temporarily detailed out during this period and in spite of the fact that morale suffered we did not lose any clericals as a result of that delay in assignments. Our normal flow through clerical pool ranges from per 25X9 month entering on duty and per month moving out of the pool to permanent assignments. An average of 10 per month are disqualified by the Medical Staff and Security and a small portion of them decide in that first three weeks that Washington is not the place for them after all.

VI. Monitoring CSGA and Agency Mix

During the year we did monitor CSGA's to the degree and extent that most Agency components became very sensitive to the existence and meaning of the CSGA. For comparison purposes the CS, for example, entered FY 1971 with a CSGA showing -144 negative grade points and ended the year with the CSGA of -123. At the present time, of course, we have a totally new ball game as far as promotions are concerned and the CSGA may well become incidental if, in fact, the one-tenth of one grade point rollback is levied on the Agency. Already, however, we are beginning to see some greater concern

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SECRET

SECRET

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for the use of QSI's in lieu of promotion. I would anticipate that if promotions are as severely limited as they could be, for instance, in the first quarter of this fiscal year we have promoted 325 employees which is already more than we could afford to promote under the one-tenth of one grade point rollback, many components will fall back on the use of the QSI. Last year there were 527 QSI's and 4,050 promotions. (Include comments on clerical mix.)

VII. Concentration on Ceiling Strength Control

Throughout the year we worked closely with components to provide the Director of Personnel with continuing input on progress being made by the Agency in reducing to its FY 1971 ceiling. We entered the year at 322 over-strength and ended the year at 19 understrength. During the final two weeks of the fiscal year, it became obvious that unless we controlled the actual machine input of gains and losses we would actually end up somewhere in the neighborhood of ^{70 80}~~40~~ to ~~50~~ understrength. In order to prevent this, we speeded up gains to every degree possible and slowed down losses as far as machine input was concerned. ceiling reduction 25X1 to be accomplished. Our present readings on Agency strength gains and losses indicated that had it not been for the new 5% and one-tenth of one grade point rollback we would now be at or nearly below our FY 1972 ceiling. At least half of this strength reduction is attributed to the conversion of 118 people from staff to contract.

Review of FY 1971 Objectives

With respect to our objectives for FY 1971, we did implement pre-exit interview

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is worthwhile. We did reduce our in-process to EOD ratio from 3 to 1 to 1.62 to 1. We have increased our contact with components and employees and we did improve the quality of new clerical employees and reduced the costs of operating the Temporary Assignment Section.

Concerns for FY 1972

With regard to FY 1972, our objectives are to save even more money in TAS operating costs, to work with OTR to modify the TAS clerical training program, to expand the three year follow-up interview concept to all Agency components, and to expand our control and processing of contract employee applicants.

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